

BOAT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates generally to a boat and to improving the incorporation of a display device such as a television in a cabin of the boat.

5 It is desirable to be able to hide a television out of view when it is not being used. A television can be hidden in a cabinet, but the cabinet is almost as visually intrusive as the television itself, and can be an obvious giveaway that a television is being hidden out of view.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

10 According to the present invention, there is provided a boat comprising:
 a hull having a deck;
 a superstructure which is above the deck and includes a cabin having a door leading thereinto from the deck and a coaming up at least part of a side of the door;
 a housing attached to the superstructure inside the cabin by the door; and
 15 an elongate display device which has first and second opposite ends and a display screen and is slidably mounted on a sliding mechanism inside the housing and the coaming such that the display screen is hidden and the first end of the display device is within the coaming and the second end is within the housing, wherein the display device is slidable out of the coaming and at least partially out of the housing so
 20 as to expose the display screen for viewing.

The present invention uses the coaming to provide part of the volume in which the display device, such as a flat screen television, is hidden. The coaming will be an area of the superstructure of localised greater thickness than adjacent wall areas of the superstructure, and the present invention takes advantage of this localised maximum
 25 thickness to hide part of the stowed display device, with the rest of the display device being hidden within the housing. The coaming adjacent to the side of the door may be a fairly substantial structure. It may for example be a moulding, possibly an integral part of a moulding forming a major part of the superstructure, with for example the external face of the moulded coaming incorporating a flight of steps which lead up
 30 from the deck to a raised bridge area above the cabin.

In our preferred embodiment, the sliding mechanism incorporates a latch which is releasable by pushing on the second end and biasing means for sliding out the unlatched display device to expose the display screen. The biasing means will therefore automatically deploy the display device once it has been unlatched, and the display device may be returned to its stowed position by pushing it back in against the force of the biasing means until the latch reactivates and locks the display device in its retracted position.

Preferably, the cabin includes a horizontal surface below the housing, and the display device is arranged to slide out just above the surface without touching the surface. In this way, the display device appears to be unsupported and to float just above the surface which may for example be a top surface of a storage unit up against a side wall of the cabin. The top surface may be at about waist height, so that when sitting down the deployed display device has its screen at a comfortable viewing height.

In our preferred embodiment, the coaming curves into the cabin in the upward direction and the housing in the sliding direction of the display device is deeper at the bottom of the housing than at the top of the housing. This imparts an unusual shape to the housing and helps to make it even less obvious that the housing is hiding the display device.

For example, the housing is generally triangular when viewed perpendicular to the sliding direction of the display device. This is a visually attractive shape which is good at hiding the fact that a display device is concealed out of view.

In our preferred embodiment, the display device is arranged to slide fully out of the housing. The sliding may be arranged to stop at the point where the first end of the display device is just about to leave the housing. In this way, the display device is fully extended, but there is not the undesired factor of a gap being left through which a person inside the cabin can see into the housing.

Preferably, the sliding mechanism is provided on a rear face of the display device remote from a front face which has the display screen. This helps to hide from view how the display device is slidably supported, and makes the arrangement more intriguing to the user. For example, the arrangement may be such that the rear face of the display device faces an adjacent cabin wall or window when the display device is

extended into the cabin. In this way, a viewer will not approach the extended display device from the rear so as to see the possibly unsightly functional nature of the sliding mechanism.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

5 A preferred non-limiting embodiment of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings.

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the invention showing the display device hidden within its housing.

Fig. 2 is a view similar to Fig. 1, but showing the display device protruding
10 from its housing.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view showing the rear face of the extended display device.

Fig. 4 is a front view looking towards the front face of the display device when stowed in its housing.

15 DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Figs. 1 and 2 are views from within a cabin of a boat in accordance with the present invention. The cabin is part of a superstructure 1 of the boat. The boat has a hull (not shown) having a deck 18 (see Fig. 4) above which the superstructure 1 extends. There is a door having a door aperture 2 which provides access from the deck
20 into the cabin. The superstructure is mainly a GRP moulding and includes a moulded coaming 3 up one side of the door aperture 2. Within the cabin is a storage unit 4 having a top surface 5 and extending along a side wall 6 of the superstructure.

As may be seen from Figs. 3 and 4, the moulding is such that the coaming is moulded to have a significant depth in the longitudinal direction of the boat (the left to
25 right direction in Fig. 4) and the coaming is considerably thicker than adjacent wall portions of the superstructure.

A generally triangular housing 7 projects into the cabin and is fitted into the gap between the top surface 5 and the coaming 3 which curves forwardly of the boat and into the cabin as it extends upwards (see Fig. 4). A display device 8 such as a flat
30 screen television is slidably mounted in the housing 7 and has a screen 9 which faces into the cabin when the display device is extended for viewing.

The display device 8 is supported on a sliding mechanism (see Fig. 3) which comprises upper and lower drawer sliders 10 on the rear face of the display device 8. The drawer sliders 10 preferably incorporate or are associated with biasing means operative to push the display device 8 out of the housing 7. There is also a latching mechanism 11 which pivots about point 12 against a spring 13 such that, by slightly pushing in the display device 8 from its stowed position shown in Fig. 1, the latching mechanism is released and the drawer sliders 10 push the display device 8 out of the housing 7 to its deployed position as shown in Fig. 2 in which the screen 9 is exposed to be viewed.

By considering Fig. 4, it may be seen that, when the display device 8 is stowed, it has a first end 14 within the moulding forming the coaming 3 and a second end 15 which is within the housing 7. Thus advantage is taken of the localised significant depth or thickness of the coaming 3 to accommodate part of the volume of the display device 8, whilst the rest of the display device 8 is accommodated in the housing 7. The housing 7 need therefore be not as big as the display device 8 and can be given a visible external shape which does not conform to the shape of the display device itself. In this way, it is possible to disguise that the display device is hidden away. This is an advantage because the display device 8 is elongate and generally rectangular as it has the form of a standard type of flat screen television and any housing closely conforming to the external shape of the display device would be likely to give away the fact that the display device is being hidden therein. The designer of the internal layout and decor of the cabin is therefore given greater creative freedom.

When extended as in Fig. 2, the display device 8 is held slightly above the top surface 5 such that there is a gap therebetween in order that the display device will appear to float above the surface 5.

The second end 15 of the display device 8 may carry a decorative panel 16 which is in visual conformity with an adjacent decorative panel 17 of the housing 7. These panels 16,17 may match the decorative style elsewhere in the cabin.